

Panchatatva Mantra

jaya sri-krishna-chaitanya
prabhu nityananda
sri-adwaita gadadhara
shrivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrinda

“I offer my respectful

obeisances unto Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu, Lord

Nityananda, Sri Advaita,

Gadadhara Pandit, Srivas

Thakur, and all the devotees

of Lord Caitanya”.

Maha Mantra

Hare Krishna
Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna
Hare Hare

Hare Rama
Hare Rama
Rama Rama
Hare Hare

Chant Hare
Krishna Mantra
and be happy...



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Who Am I?

Hare Krishna Friends,

Please accept our respectful obeisance!

We have understood that Vedas are the only medium of understanding God and the process of understanding, Shabda Praman is the authorized mode. Before we proceed to understand further, let's pause for a second and try to understand about ourselves first. This is the first step in Spiritual education.

Living in a World of Turmoil

There is always an unnatural attempt to achieve material so-called progress at all costs and the world is always in a state of turmoil and unrest. The race to exploit the material energy before others has reached such a state that the world is on the brink of a nuclear holocaust.

Normally people say "**We should move forward**". This is a very competitive world and we should move very fast. Unfortunately, we are all running like a MAD PERSON who knows neither the source nor the destination. First let us understand our identity, then our real destination and only then we can MOVE FORWARD. If you don't know your identity then you are a MAD MAN not MODERN MAN.

Who am I?

Understanding oneself is called the science of soul.

Let us say a person is recruited in a very big company and after reaching there, the HR (Human Resources) person just walks up to him and says you may start working from today. The first question that person will ask is "What is my role in this company?", "What are my responsibilities?" If you tell me this, then I can begin my work accordingly. Thus, we can clearly understand from this that, we need to first understand who we are and what our responsibility in this world.

What is the basis of our identity?

Name, Position, Sex, Relationship, Religion, Nationality etc.

These are our identity proofs today. Spontaneously from the womb to the tomb, we associate ourselves with only these as our identities. But, you will be surprised to know that this so called identity of ours can change any moment. A person may change his name, his position can change, he can change his sex, may change his Nationality and may also change his religion. When one person changes his name, does that mean that the person also changes into someone different? If one person changes his religion, does that mean he has become different now? NO. We remain the same even if we change our Name, Position, Sex, Relationship, Religion and Nationality. The basis for all these identities is the BODY. Surprisingly, according to modern science our body is also changing every moment!

Then WHO AM I???

According to Vedas which is infallible, we are not this body, we are SPIRIT SOUL. Doctors dissect and study a dead body. What makes a living body possess emotions and feelings like pain, pleasure, happiness, distress etc? The SOUL is the spark of life that makes the body appear alive and when the soul leaves the body, we say the person is dead.

Existence of SOUL: Fact or Fantasy



When people hear about the soul, the first thing they ask is, "Can you show me the soul?" or "What is the proof of the soul's existence?" For gaining awareness of any knowledge we need an appropriate instrument. For example, a Physicist, or an Electronics Engineer, cannot capture an electron with his finger or hands, nor can he see it with his bare eyes; but he can observe the light reflection coming out from an electron on the CRT screen. This is the proof for the existence of an electron. You cannot see X-rays with your naked eyes, but you can understand the presence of X-rays by seeing the effect it produces on a X-ray photograph sheet, when the X-rays are passed through a body. This is called "inferential logic". Using the same logic the presence of the soul in a living body can be easily proved.

Proof for the existence of the Soul

We need to be very scientific and so we need to provide proof for the existence of this soul. Anyone can claim anything, but we should be very scientific and systematic in understanding everything. So what is the evidence for the existence of the soul?

Understanding by common sense

Firstly common sense and this is uncommonly found. Common sense says that we are not these bodies. When someone is dead, a person present there, beats his chest and says so and so has passed away. Now who has passed away? If we are the body, the body is lying there, why don't we feed the body, nourish the body, and embrace the body? So common sense says that we had relation with someone who was living within the body but not the body.



Isn't it so amazing that the very same personality, who was so lovable and you just couldn't live even for a moment without him, is lying there and you can't live with him anymore and it has become so abominable due to the absence of something, something that is missing.

I still remember the time when my grandfather had died; he was about 65 years and his wife my grandmother, 55 years and since all the others were yet to arrive, my grandmother was staying there at night, till everyone arrived and the last rites was done. So along with my grandmother, that night I was staying with the body. This was the person with whom I had been brought up, very dear to me, but that night I was so scared to sleep in the same room with that person, and all through night I was thinking why am I so scared? I used to love this person so much but today I am scared that he will get up. And my grandmother who was there with him like a shadow, eating, sleeping, reading together, everything together, she said "I will be there in the next room, I am very scared". That time I was thinking what is there in the body that makes the body so lovable, adorable, and the absence of which makes the body so obnoxious. Earlier we took bath and touched that person and now we touch that person and take bath to purify ourselves! What is it that makes the body alive, full of energy, life and the absence of which makes it simply degraded in time. That is Soul, this is common sense.

Intuitive Understanding

Next is intuitive understanding, our language indicates that we are not this body. Have you ever thought about it? We say my hand, my leg, my nose etc. We don't say I hand, I leg, I nose, just like now I say this is my shawl, my money, I don't say I shawl, I money, because I know I am not this money, or this shawl. This shawl and money belongs to me. Similarly we say my hand, my leg, then who is this me? To whom does this hand and leg belong to? So intuitively we are indicating through our language that this body belongs to me, but I am not this body, I am something different from this body, and if I am different, then who is that? Somebody may say, okay, theoretically it makes sense, but what is the proof of its existence?

A group of medical college students were addressed about the subject matter soul. While discussions were going on, one person stood up and challenged the speaker saying, can you show me the soul? If you show, only then I will agree, then the speaker told him, there are so many things that you cannot see, but you have to accept based on some symptoms. You cannot see the air, but you can feel the air. There are so many things which we can't see with our eyes. We may feel by other senses. There are certain things which we can't even understand through our senses, we just have to see the symptoms and understand. The speaker then took up an example and asked him, do you have a mind? He replied yes. The speaker then told him now you have to show me, unless you show me, I can't accept that you have a mind.

But when we see the face of a person, we say, your mind is very disturbed. How? Face is the index of the mind. His mind is happy, or sad, or disturbed, we see the symptoms on face though we cannot see the mind, subtler than the mind is intelligence.

We don't see anyone's intelligence, and if you break his head and take out grey matter, that's not intelligence. An Elephant may have more grey matter than human being. But that's not the symptom of intelligence. What is the symptom of intelligence? If someone is quick in grasping some points then we say he has very good intelligence. In fact the International Association of Mentally Handicapped, they define intelligence as an ability to adapt to a new environment. How quickly you can adapt to the subtleties, finer newness of the environment. Sometimes children are mentally retarded and they take long time to adjust to their own environment. If they are put into different culture, food habits and all, they take longer time, and if you are smart, they can quickly understand the subtle things and adjust to that. How to walk, how to eat, how to talk, everything, but if you are dull it takes a long time. So intelligence cannot be measured by keeping a scale on your head and measuring it. No. You can measure the amount of intelligence by some tests. How you perform in it or how quickly you grasp the subtle things. You can't see the intelligence, by symptoms only we can understand. If I say you don't show me intelligence, so you don't have intelligence, would you agree to that? No.

So the point is if something is gross, it can be touched, measured, felt, smelt etc. But when things become subtler, they can be known only through their symptoms. If we say there is soul, then we need to understand that it has a symptom. So, what is the symptom of the soul? The symptom of the soul is consciousness. Wherever you see the consciousness, there must be the presence of soul. If you cut the hand of the dead body, there is no consciousness. On the other hand if while speaking, you touch something hot, then you are quick to react. A dead body cannot react though everything is present there, brain, heart blood everything is there, but there is something that is missing in the entire body, the body is unconscious. There is no consciousness. In the animals, there is consciousness, in fact even in trees, there is consciousness, like touch me not, if you touch, it is sensitive and closes. There are certain trees, if an insect comes close to it, it suddenly closes, movement is a symptom of consciousness. In fact, the trees move towards the source of sunlight. They are conscious of light. Though may be very dull, but consciousness is present there. The table, microphone, the dead matter cannot be conscious. But anything living, this which has life means it has a soul. In whatever and wherever you see consciousness that indicates the symptom of the soul.



Bhagavad Gita (2.13) says:

*dehino 'smin yatha dehe
kaumaram yauvanam jara
tatha dehantara-praptir
dhiras tatra na muhyati*

As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A self-realized soul is not bewildered by such a change.

Since every living entity is an individual soul, each is changing his body every moment, manifesting sometimes as a child, sometimes as a youth, and sometimes as an old man. Yet the same spirit soul is always present and does not undergo any change. This individual soul finally leaves the body at death and transmigrates to another body.

THE UNSEEN DRIVER OF THE BODILY CAR

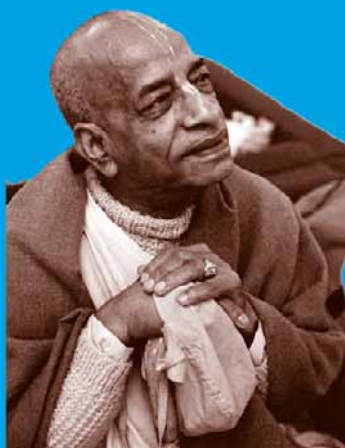
A CAR CANNOT BUDGE EVEN AN INCH WITHOUT THE DRIVER; THE BODY CANNOT PERFORM ANY FUNCTION WITHOUT THE DRIVER i.e. SOUL

Watch out Reincarnation, Near Death Experience (NDE), and Nature of Soul in the next issue...

Srila Prabhupada Speaks out

Science of Soul

The magnitude of the soul is so small for our material calculation that he cannot be seen even by the most powerful microscope; therefore, he is invisible. As far as the soul's existence is concerned, no one can establish his existence experimentally beyond the proof of sruti, or Vedic wisdom. We have to accept this truth, because there is no other source of understanding the existence of the soul, although it is a fact by perception.



There are many things we have to accept solely on grounds of superior authority. No one can deny the existence of his father, based upon the authority of his mother. There is no source of understanding the identity of the father except by the authority of the mother. Similarly, there is no source of understanding the soul except by studying the Vedas. In other words, the soul is inconceivable by human experimental knowledge. The soul is consciousness and conscious - that also is the statement of the Vedas, and we have to accept that.